

ROSWELL PARK MEMORIAL INSTITUTE



Robert P. Whalen, M.D.
Commissioner of Health

Department of Health ■ State of New York

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Gerald P. Murphy, M.D., D.Sc.
Institute Director

March 25, 1976

Dr. Victor A. McKusick
Chairman and Physician-in-Chief
Department of Medicine
The Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland 21205

Dear Victor:

I received the edited copy of the Nomenclature Committee and was disappointed to see the revisions that had been made, which in some cases were in direct opposition to what was stated in the text.

Let me recount the history of this Committee and its responsibilities. The Committee was formulated and charged in plenary session at the New Haven Conference to set up guidelines for naming human genes. Through correspondence and a meeting at Rotterdam it was decided that the first order of business was to work out a procedure for naming only human enzyme genes. Nomenclature already exists for blood groups and histocompatibility genes. It was also decided that an additional meeting was necessary before the Baltimore Conference to prepare this important contribution. Dr. Bergsma was approached about funding, and he agreed provided that a report of this Committee be published. Indeed, this report could already have been published, but the Nomenclature Committee felt it was more appropriate for it to appear in Gene Mapping 3; and, in fact, the plenary session of the Baltimore Conference voted to accept this report as it originally stood. Many hours were spent with the exact wording, what enzymes were to be included, and with a consideration of the original designation of the genes. To alter this report in any way would be contradictory to the responsibilities of the Committee and the expectations of Dr. Bergsma.

I realize that each year there has been a listing of the genes and particularly those discussed at each annual conference. I view the nomenclature report as being separate from this listing. An easy solution to the problem is to publish the report in its original form and construct a second listing or an addendum with the additional markers discussed at the Baltimore Conference under separate headings, such as in my first list in the New Haven Conference. With regard to clarity, the wording of the first paragraph after "Guidelines for Genetic Nomenclature of Human Enzymes" on page 1 is now confusing. The original was clear.

Dr. Victor A. McKusick

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Although I am not completely satisfied with the nomenclature rules set out in this report, as the other committee members are aware, I feel this report is in the right direction and serves a specific and essential need of the gene mapping community--a need which undoubtedly will require updating from time to time in the future.

I do hope that my comments and those of the other members of the committee are considered before the revised report is published.

If I can answer specific questions, please don't hesitate to call (716/845-3108).

Sincerely yours,



Thomas B. Shows

cc: Dr. E. R. Giblett, Chairman
Dr. D. Bergsma, Editor

TBS/cry

Dear Tom,
We plan to publish the
nomenclature report in its original
form. Many thanks. Victor